

SB 304
In-Person Testimony

SARA:

Chairwoman & Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of SB 304, *the Born to Invest Act*. My name is Sara Hart Weir, and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities. We are the leading advocacy organization for individuals with IDD and their families in Kansas.

I am joined today by my colleague, Whit Downing. We are here to speak in strong support of this bill. Both for its sound policy design and for its meaningful, long-term impact on the next generation of Kansans with disabilities.

SB 304 is a simple, smart, proactive and not to mention NO COST policy that ensures Kansas families receive timely information about financial tools available, from Trump Accounts, to 529s to ABLE Accounts, from the very beginning of a child's life

WHIT:

Thank you, Sara. My name is Whit Downing, and I am autistic - and our KCDD VP of Policy.

If my family had received information about KS ABLE accounts at the time of my birth, it would have changed how we navigated disability systems from the very beginning.

Even though I was not on Social Security at birth, having that information early would have told us something powerful: that disability does not mean a **lifetime of financial poverty**.

It would have shown my family that planning, saving, and dreaming were not off-limits simply because I am autistic.

I just had my 30th birthday. I think about how much could have been saved over time... not because my family had extra money, but because we could have planned **and invested in me**. Small, consistent savings add up when families are given the right tools early.

For families of children with disabilities, the early years are often filled with uncertainty... medical appointments, evaluations, and learning how to navigate complex systems. Financial planning is rarely explained, and it is often introduced much too late.

SB 304 helps change that. This bill is about shifting the message we send to families of children with disabilities

It says:

- You are allowed to plan
- You are allowed to save
- You are allowed to imagine a future that is full, independent, and expansive

And when that message is delivered early, it can change the trajectory of a life.

ABLE accounts are especially powerful because they allow savings to grow without jeopardizing critical federal and state disability benefits. SB 304 helps ensure families know these tools exist before missed opportunities accumulate into lifelong barriers.

SARA:

We respectfully urge the committee to support and pass SB 304, the Born to Invest Act, this session.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We are happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Specifically, the bill directs the Office of Vital Statistics within the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to securely share basic birth information with the Kansas State Treasurer.

This allows the Treasurer's Office to provide families with information about government-administered savings programs that can support a child's future. One of these savings programs is an ABLE account, which is a saving tool for individuals with disabilities.

SB 304 does not create new programs or require new bureaucracy. It uses existing state infrastructure to ensure families receive clear, accurate information at a moment when they are most likely to need it and least likely to know where to look.

SB 304 recognizes a simple truth: timing matters. When families have information early, they are better positioned to plan, save, and make informed decisions that benefit their children for decades to come.